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55 WATERFOWL AND 4 BIG-GAME  
SANCTUARIES ADDED IN A YEAR  
TO FEDERAL CHAIN OF REFUGES

Progress of Biological Survey's Wildlife Restoration Program  
Reported by Chief Gabrielson at North American  
Wildlife Conference at St. Louis, Mo.

Fifty-five refuges were acquired and substantial progress in establishing 50 additional refuges also was made the past fiscal year by the Biological Survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in carrying out its national program of waterfowl restoration.

These new refuges and those previously acquired in the United States contain more than 2,000,000 acres, said Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, chief of the Survey, today (March 4) in addressing the second North American Wildlife Conference at St. Louis, Mo. He explained that many refuges functioned as waterfowl sanctuaries for the first time last year. About 500,000 acres will be flooded this year for the first or second season if there is an adequate spring run-off from snow and rain.

Dr. Gabrielson pointed out that practically all Federal waterfowl refuges contain some dry land, which makes them valuable also for upland game. There are some 15 refuges, he said, that harbor prairie chickens, and about 16 that contain sharp-tailed grouse. Many refuges in the west have pheasant populations and others have quail of various species, or grouse, as well as deer and antelope in small numbers, and many nongame species of birds and mammals.

Establishment of four new refuges for big game last year also was reported by the Survey chief. They are the Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge in Oregon, the Charles Sheldon Antelope Range in Nevada, the Desert Game Range in southern Nevada for protecting the fast-vanishing desert bighorn sheep, and the recently established Fort Peck Game Range in eastern Montana, formerly the home of elk, buffalo, and bighorn sheep. All the land needed at the Elk Refuge at Jackson Hole, Wyo., for producing an adequate supply of food for the elk there has been acquired or is being acquired. Progress also has been made in developing the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma.

Since June 30, 1934, emergency funds and the allocation of public lands have made it possible for the Biological Survey to acquire and set aside nearly 5,000,000 acres in the United States for refuge purposes. This wildlife sanctuary area is more than two and one-half times as large as the 1,800,000 acres acquired in the United States in all years previous to 1934.

"There is a growing understanding that regulations governing the human take of game species must be based on knowledge of the numbers of breeding stock and their reproduction," said Dr. Gabrielson. "To draft regulations that will perpetuate the sport of wildfowling the Bureau has strengthened its investigational service on the waterfowl situation."

The number of biologists, U. S. and deputy game management agents and other Survey employees engaged in the study and analysis of the migrations of the birds and conditions affecting them not only on their migration routes but also on nesting and wintering grounds has been augmented by the employment of special biologists on each of the four main flyways to correlate the information gathered. Each refuge within a waterfowl flyway is also a center for gathering information, and in addition State game officials and other cooperators supply valuable information.

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"This information," says the Survey Chief, "enables us to gain a fairly accurate picture of the waterfowl situation and to draft regulations that will give the birds the protection they need. Only by holding down the kill will we be able to increase the breeding population on the nesting grounds in this country and Canada."

Dr. Gabrielson reviewed the accomplishments of wildlife research during the past year and pointed out that closer cooperation between Federal and State administrative agencies has resulted in speeding up the wildlife restoration program. He also advocated better control of oil pollution in water areas to prevent loss of wildlife.

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